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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/735,426	12/12/2000	Paul O. Davison	C-8-2	5287
21394	7590	03/17/2004	EXAMINER	
ARTROCARE CORPORATION 680 VAQUEROS AVENUE SUNNYVALE, CA 94085-3523			COHEN, LEE S	
		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	
		3739	12	
DATE MAILED: 03/17/2004				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/735,426	DAVISON ET AL.
	Examiner Lee S. Cohen	Art Unit 3739

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 February 2004.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-102 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) 8-26, 34, 35, 37-40, 49, 50, 58-60 and 70-102 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) 1, 3-7, 27-33 and 36 is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 41, 55, 56 and 61-66 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) 42-48, 51-54, 57 and 67-69 is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Claims 8-26, 34, 35, 37-40, 49, 50, 58-60, and 70-102 stand withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected inventions and species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in Paper No 8 and 9. Claims 58 and 59 have been withdrawn since they read upon Figure 37. The withdrawn claims should be cancelled in response to this action

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 41, 55, 56, and 61 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Bales et al (Re. 33,925). Applicant's attention is directed to the figure 3 embodiment. Support 88 has a belly portion with a width equal to the shaft width. A portion of the return electrode is clearly proximal to the electrode support. Accordingly, the claim limitation is met by the reference.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 62-64 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bales et al (Re. 33,925) in view of Goble et al (6,056,746). Bales et al fail to disclose the particular materials for the electrode. Goble et al discloses such materials to have been well known in the art at column 6, lines 62-64. Accordingly, the use of the same in Bales et al would have been no more than an obvious design expedient. The particular percentages are within the level of skill of the artisan to select to optimize performance of the device absent any disclosed criticality.

Claims 65 and 66 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bales et al (Re. 33,925). The particular length of the shaft would have been an obvious design expedient to the skilled artisan since it is merely dependent upon areas of the body to be reached.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1, 3-7, 27-33, and 36 are allowed.

Claims 42-48, 51-54, 57, and 67-69 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Specification

The specification is objected to as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter. See 37 CFR 1.75(d)(1) and MPEP § 608.01(o). Correction of the following is required: the range limitation of claim 5, the limitation of claim 7, and the range limitation of claim 52.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Lee S. Cohen whose telephone number is 703-308-2998. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 7:00-3:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Linda Dvorak can be reached on 703-308-0994. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Lee S. Cohen
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3739

LSC
March 13, 2004